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PRESS RELEASE

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Terrell L. Harris, the United States Attorney for the Western District of Tennessee, announced today that Timothy W. Lowrance, a resident of Newburn, Tennessee, pleaded guilty to an information charging him with conspiracy to commit mail fraud in violation of Title 18, United States Code, § 371. Violations of the federal conspiracy statute are punishable by a term of imprisonment of up to five years and a fine of up to \$250, 000.

The information charged that Lowrance operated the West Tennessee Handgun Permit School, a school authorized to teach a statutorily required handgun safety course. According to the information, an individual applying for a state issued handgun carry permit is required to take and pass the safety course in order to obtain a permit. The information further charged that the members of the conspiracy provided certificates signed by Lowrance, which indicated that an

applicant had passed the safety course, to individuals who had not taken and passed the course. The conspiracy operated from December of 2000 to June of 2001.

The case was investigated by Jack Cunningham and Bill Yates, investigators with the Tennessee Highway Patrol's Criminal Investigation Division, Brent Booth of the of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, and John Lewoczko of the Jackson office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The case is being prosecuted by the United States Attorney's office in Memphis.

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